music at convocation hall

MACH at the Winspear

Marnie Giesbrecht, organ
with
The University of Alberta
Academy Strings
Tanya Prochazka, conductor

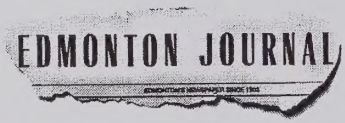
Tuesday, October 28, 2003 at 12:00 pm

Francis Winspear Centre for Music
Edmonton, Alberta

Program

DEPARTMENT OF
MUSIC

United Way
OF EDMONTON AND AREA


EDMONTON JOURNAL

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Program

UNITED WAY CHEQUE PRESENTATION

Introduction and Toccata on "All Creatures of our God and King" (*Lasst uns erfreuen*) (1987) — Jacobus Kloppers (b. 1937)

Toccata and Fugue in F Major, BWV 540 — Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Symphony No. 5 in C Sharp Minor (1901-1904)
IV. Adagietto — Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)

Concerto in G Minor for Organ, Timpani and String Orchestra (1938) — Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

The University of Alberta Academy Strings, 2003-2004
Tanya Prochazka, Conductor

Violin
Aaron Au
Kristin Dahle
Natalia Gomez
Kenneth Heise
Melissa Hemsworth**
Ryan Herbold
Aaron Hryciw
Cynthia Johnston
Elizabeth McHan**
Trang Nguyen
Courtney Parker
Grant Sigurdson
Sabrina Steed**
Sam Vance
David Wong

Viola
Jeanette Comeau
Leanne Dammann*
Zohreh Gervais
Emma Hooper
Andrea Kipp*
Viera Linderova
Charlene Vandenborn
Sarah Weingarten

Cello
Anthony Bacon*
Matthieu Damer
Simo Eng
Paula Harding
Martin Kloppers*
Doug Millie
Mark Moran
Caitlin Smith

Double Bass
Stephanie Boisvert
Jonathan Hickle
Toscha Turner*

Harp
Laura Neeland

Timpani
Jeff Donkersgoed

*Alternating Principal Players
**Alternating Concertmaster

Program Notes

Johann Sebastian Bach
b. 21 March 1685~ Eisenach
d. 28 July 1750~ Leipzig

Toccata and Fugue in F Major, BWV 540
Toccata and Fugue in F major illustrates a decisive stylistic change in Bach's compositions. The change resulted from Bach's acquaintance with contemporary Italian music, which he encountered in Weimar in 1713 and 1714. The new style provided him not only new ideas for specific musical elements but also with new possibilities for the organization of musical material. Indeed, the influence Antonio Vivaldi's compositions and the Italian concerto principle are strongly detected in this work.

The toccata, a non-liturgical work, was likely written for a recital or perhaps to demonstrate the capabilities of a new instrument Bach was asked to inspect. Acknowledging no limits to the performer's keyboard skills and accepting no restrictions, the toccata is mammoth and represents one of Bach's most elaborate compositions for organ, unflagging in vigor, spacious in design, and powerful in development. Bach rarely, if ever, exceeded its bounds.

Measuring 438 bars, the toccata is through-composed, but divided into several sections. Although as a form toccata usually conveys an improvisatory style, Bach maintains rigid melodic, rhythmic and contrapuntal control. Relentless rhythmic pulsation and triadically oriented melodic figures reveal the influence of two of Vivaldi's most distinctive features. Further exhibiting the Italian influence, the movement's structural premise is alternation between solo and tutti sections, modeled after ritornello form often found in concertos. The trio texture created when two treble lines are manipulated over a continuo-like bass line constitutes the tutti section, while solo sections are comprised of the opening canons and imposing pedal solos, which cover the entire range of Bach's pedal board, exceeding that available on many organs today.

While the Toccata is modeled after the Italian the concerto grosso, the fugue is firmly rooted in the German keyboard tradition. The drama in the toccata is replaced with clear counterpoint in the style of a vocal motet. Although perhaps less dazzling than the toccata, its construction is masterful and it is the only true double fugue in the organ works of Bach. Measuring less than half the length of the toccata, the sheer contrapuntal ingenuity compensates for its lighter weight. Structured in three parts, the fugue presents two contrasting themes first separately, then together.

Francis Poulenc
b. 7 January 1899~ Paris
d. 30 January 1963~ Paris

Concerto for organ, orchestra and timpani in G Minor
Poulenc composed the Concerto in G minor in 1938 at the request of American born Princess de Polignac, an able organist who also commanded the most respected Parisian salons and lavishly bestowed monetary gifts and commissions on composers such as Debussy, Falla, Stravinsky, Fauré, and Ravel.

Not being an organist himself, Poulenc studied the instrument at great length, consulting Duruflé on the registrations. The concerto draws on both the quasi-improvisational fantasias and toccatas of Buxtehude and Bach and the adaptations of these styles made by French composers such as Gigout and de Grigny. Despite the importance Poulenc placed on freedom from foreign influence within his compositions (especially the pervasive shadow of Wagner), it is not surprising that he turned to the German masters given the instrument for which he was composing for the first time.

More than twenty minutes long, the concerto is built on a single theme and played without pause, despite being divided into seven distinct sections. Like his contemporaries Vierne and Alain, Poulenc employs the organ's ability to generate massive spatial dissonance, sensuous lyricism and gentle counterpoint. The organ and strings are employed in every possible combination, with particular emphasis on contrast and dialogue. While the organ has several lengthy solos, some lightly accompanied by the strings, the prevalent arrangement between the organ and strings is as two equal bodies.

Although the concerto is non-liturgical, according to Poulenc: "It is not the amusing Poulenc of the Concerto for two pianos, but more like a Poulenc en route for the cloisters, very 15th" century." Incorporating controlled balance of diverse elements, ranging from thunderous neo-baroque magnificence modeled after Bach, to lighthearted string motives, sentimental romantic passages, and finally religious reticence, the Concerto is not only highly individualistic but also one of Poulenc's most serious works.

Gustav Mahler
b. 7 May 1860~ Bohemia
d. 18 May 1911~ Vienna

"Adagietto," Symphony, No. 5
Although completed in 1902, Mahler continued to revise the Fifth Symphony until three months before his death. He seems to have struggled with the work, writing: "I've finished my Fifth—it had to be almost completely re-orchestrated. I simply can't understand why I still had to make such mistakes, like the merest beginner. It is clear that all the experience I had gained in writing the first four symphonies let me down in this one—for a completely new style demanded a new technique."

The new style to which Mahler refers was the result of him closely acquainting himself with the music of J. S. Bach. The style demanded great clarity in the orchestral writing, achieved with restrained scoring, which in turn created a lighter texture. The work stands out among Mahler's symphonies as the first instrumental work since the Symphony, no. 1 (1884-1888) that altogether dispenses with both the human voice and overtly programmatic elements. While the work is consciously aprogrammatic, it does quote previous songs, letting us know that Mahler was never wholly freed from unconscious associations implicit in these fleeting melodic memories.

The "Adagietto," is the **fourth movement** of the extended five-movement symphony. Heard for years by audiences who know nothing else of the symphony, it is one of Mahler's most readily recognized fingerprints. Unfamiliarity of the work as a whole is the result of the "Adagietto" often being plucked out of the larger structure and performed alone—a tradition that began in 1907 with Mahler himself who conducted the movement at a concert in Rome. The movement has added special meaning as Mahler claimed to have sent it in 1902 as a musical love letter to Alma Schindler, an astute and skilled musician and the woman who would later become his wife.

Scored for harp and strings, the "Adagietto" depicts the restraint with which Mahler carefully labored. Perhaps expressing the sense of homelessness felt throughout his life as a Jew and an outsider, the opening melody recalls Mahler's setting of Rückert's poem *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen* (I am lost in the world). Serenely beautiful, it serves as an extended moment of repose and reflection between the buzzing worlds of the Scherzo and the Finale, which frame it within the symphony as a whole.

Jacobus Kloppers
b. 1937~ Krugersdorp, South Africa

Introduction and Toccata on "All Creatures of Our God and King"
Audiences will already be familiar with *Introduction and Toccata on "All Creatures of Our God and King"* on a variety of levels. Not only does it employ on the hymn tune of *Lasst un erfreuen* (1623) as the basis for the work, listeners will inevitably think of the text by Francis of Asisi to which the hymn tune has become inseparable and from which it draws its title. The work may also be familiar to listeners in another form. *Canticle of the Sun*, commissioned for the Davis Concert Organ Inaugural Gala concert in 2002, reworks the earlier toccata for SATB choir, brass and organ for the final verse.

Written in 1987, this earlier work draws upon the tradition of the toccata: a piece intended primarily as a display of digital dexterity, often free in form and almost always for a solo keyboard instrument. While many contemporary audiences may be more familiar with toccatas of Scarlatti, Buxtehude, and Bach, the form actually dates as early as the 15th century in Germany.

Originally dedicated to Marnie Giesbrecht, the work is a rich display of virtuosity revealing nearly all the colors possible on the organ within the short confines of the work. It begins with a simple introduction of the hymn tune. After a brief pause, the simplicity of the opening is immediately contrasted with the brilliance of rapid repeated notes, above which the hymn tune continues to sound.

As the work progresses, the texture becomes increasingly dense and technically challenging, building in intensity toward the final chords. One will also note that the hymn tune is displaced registrally, moving downward until finally it reaches the pedals, sounding forth in awesome grandeur. Giesbrecht's comment in her recent recording, *Now and Then,* captures the mood of this impressive work, which spans five centuries of musical tradition: "Kloppers's Toccata evokes images of creatures from the tiniest insects and birds to the greatest beasts and the glory of the whole creation."

Notes by Deanna Davis

Marnie Giesbrecht has performed in major cities and universities throughout Canada, the United States, South Africa and Europe. A versatile keyboard artist, she performs regularly as an organ soloist and chamber musician.

Marnie studied and concertized as a pianist throughout her undergraduate (University of Alberta) and graduate degrees (Mozarteum, Salzburg, Austria and Eastman School of Music, Rochester, N.Y.). Her organ performance studies were with Jacobus Kloppers and Gerhard Krapf. She graduated with a Doctor of Music degree (University of Alberta) in Pipe Organ Performance in 1988, the recipient of numerous scholarships and awards. Dr. Giesbrecht is Professor of Music at the University of Alberta where she teaches organ, piano and related subjects. She served as National President of the Royal Canadian College of Organists from 2000 to 2002. "Now and Then," a solo organ CD recorded on the Casavant organ in Convocation Hall at the University of Alberta and the Létourneau organ in West End Christian Reformed Church, Edmonton, was released on the Arktos label in Spring 2002.

Marnie Giesbrecht performs regularly with Joachim Segger as Duo Majoya. Duo Majoya's 2002/2003 concerts included, among others, solo and duo performances on series in Notre Dame, Paris and St. Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna; at organ festivals in Montreal, Quebec and Charlotteown, PEI; and on the new Davis Concert Organ in the Francis Winspear Centre for Music in Edmonton, Alberta for the opening gala and their own program and national broadcast, "Duo Majoya in Concert." They have been heard live and on broadcast in Canada, the United States, Europe and South Africa. Their CD "Skyscape," released on the Arktos label in 2002, received 5 out of 5 stars from Rick Phillips of CBC Sound Advice. Earlier releases are "Dancing Ice: Solo and Duo Canadian Organ Music;" "Transcriptions for Two: Firebird;" and "The Elegance and the Ecstasy," piano duets by Mozart, Schubert and Brahms. For more information on Marnie Giesbrecht, University of Alberta organ programs or Duo Majoya visit www.arts.ualberta.ca/~musorg and/or majoya@majoya.com.

Originally Australian, **Tanya Prochazka** studied at the Paris Conservatoire with Andre Navarra (cello), Jean Hubeau (chamber music) and Indiana University with Janos Starker. International soloist, recitalist and chamber musician. She was cellist of Ensemble I, Vienna; principal cellist of Scottish Baroque Ensemble, London Mozart Players, English Sinfonia; taught at the Royal Academy and Guildhall School, London, Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne, Australian National Academy of Music. Ms Prochazka gives regular masterclasses and orchestra clinics. She records for Atma and Arktos featuring French, American, English and Czech music.

Hot off the press is her world premier recording of the "New Goldberg Variations", with pianist Jacques Despres, of variations composed by leading American composers Frazelle, Rouse, Lieberson, Corigliano, Schickele and Danielpour on the Goldberg Aria theme by Bach. This adds to her growing discography of CDs: "American Cello Masterpieces", "Poulenc, Fauré and Saint-Saëns", "Landsmal", Canadian Solo Cello works by Fisher and Ho, and "The Passionate Englishman". Soon to be released is "Bohemian Woods", music by Dvořák, Janáček and Martinu, with pianist Milton Schlosser.

Upcoming Events

November

2 Sunday, 3:00 pm
Master of Music Recital
Karen Nell, Choral Conducting
"Ah, the Sea..."
Oceanus Ensemble
with Rob Curtis, piano
and the Island Orchestra
Free admission

2 Sunday, 8:00 pm
University of Alberta
Academy Strings
Tanya Prochazka, Conductor
Featuring works by Mahler, Rosauro,
Barber and Kilar

3 Monday, 12:10 pm
Music at Noon, **Convocation Hall**
Student Recital Series
Featuring students from the
Department of Music
Free admission

5 Wednesday, 8:00 pm
University of Alberta
Orchestral Winds and Percussion
Malcolm Forsyth, Director
Program will include works by
Dvořák, Gabrieli and Stravinsky

7 Friday, 8:00 pm
Music at Convocation Hall
Philippe Bertaud, guitar
Program will include works by
Bertaud, Powell, Albeniz, Satie, Piazzola,
Buarque, Carlevaro, Dyens, Lauro,
Villa-Lobos, Giuliani
Admission: $10/student/senior, $15/adult

8 Saturday, 2:00 pm
Faculty Recital
Roger Admiral, piano
Program will include works Bashaw,
Matthews, Priest, Rizzuto and Mather
Studio 27, Fine Arts Building

12 Wednesday, 5:00 pm
University of Alberta Symphony
Orchestra Concerto Competition
Free admission

14 Friday, 2:00 pm
World Music Sampler
Studio 27, Fine Arts Building
Free admission
For more information please contact the
Canadian Centre for Ethnomusicology
Telephone 492-8211

14 Friday, 8:00 pm
Faculty & Friends
Patricia Tao, piano
Featuring works by Beethoven, Corigliano
Liszt , Messiaen, and Brahms
Admission: $10/student/senior, $15/adult

16 Sunday, Concert I: 4:00 pm
Pre-concert talk at 3:00 pm
New Music Series
Molinari String Quartet and
Marie-Danielle Parent, soprano
Complete works for string quartet (eight)
by R Murray Schafer
In the presence of the composer

16 Sunday, Concert II: 8:00 pm
Pre-concert talk at 7:00 pm
New Music Series
Molinari String Quartet and
Marie-Danielle Parent, soprano
Complete works for string quartet (eight)
by R Murray Schafer
In the presence of the composer

department of Music

Unless otherwise indicated
Admission: $5/student/senior, $10/adult Convocation Hall, Arts Building
Please note: All concerts and events are subject to change without notice.
Please call 492-0601 to confirm concerts (after office hours a recorded message will inform you of any changes to our schedule).